

DEDICATION

To Mr. Claude C. Bicknell whose interest, enthusiasm, and persistent devotion to family history have made this effort a reality.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Special credit must be given to: Mr. Claude Bicknell's booklet, "CERTAIN KNOWN FACTS REGARDING OUR FACTION OF THE BICKNELL FAMILY" published about 1965 from which much has been gleaned;

many, many family members who have cooperated by providing data which has helped establish the middle generations;

Hale and Lucille Bicknell for their interest and research and for providing the chapter on THE VIRGINIA BICKNELLS;

these who generously contributed time and effort connected with the drudgery of correction, assembly, and the many unnoticed but necessary items of labor: Irene Casey Warner, Avenell Fox Powell, Bernice Bicknell, Laura J. Miller, Murray and Betty Bicknell, Elsie I. Enley, Mona C. East, and Helen E. Reeve.

Vera Reeve

Vera Reeve---August 1972

1118 Broadway
Vincennes, IN 47591

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Emma Ann Puttmann - 235-2457
320 Mayfair Dr. J He

Bicknell Family

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The BICKNELL/AZBELL---and to some extent, HULEN---relationships are quite extraordinary. My grandfather Shelby C. Wallace (see p. 201) in commenting on my efforts to "pick his brains" for his knowledge of early family, once said, "Back in those days, there weren't as many people as nowadays, and relatives ended up marrying each other." How correct he was can be easily seen in these families. The Bicknell-Azbell tie is especially unique because it goes back so far and continues throughout. Two early Azbell brothers, WILLIAM and JOHN, and MALINDA---a Cherokee Indian girl reared in our Samuel Bicknell family---begin this complicated situation. Malinda, who is said to have taken the maiden name of William and John's mother Dorothy ROSS, married William Azbell and had 4 children before she died; one was Mary Nancy Azbill who married 1st Poosey Reeder and 2nd Thomas Bicknell, son of Samuel. William Azbell then married 2nd Elizabeth Moore and had 9 children by her. Linsfield Bicknell, son of Samuel, married Mary Polly Azbill, daughter of John Azbill, brother of William. The children and grandchildren of these Bicknell men then intermarried with the families of both Azbell men and thus the tangled web is under way!

We do not claim that the evidence given in this compilation is "fool-proof," but we have tried to make it as accurate as possible with documentation if available. That we have been able to do as well as we have is due in large part to two people: Mrs. Ethelda Henry, whose father George T. Bennett began working years ago, and Mrs. Lucie B. Alger whose intimate ties with both families have made possible her invaluable contributions in understanding.

Mr. Bennett published 2 books on Azbills and while there are many errors, I agree with his daughter, Mrs. Henry, when she wrote me 10 June 1977: "I do know that much of that history is correct--or nearly enough correct to give good leads to those searching for their ancestors, and would be valuable to those who were willing to corroborate the material therein contained."

Mrs. Alger wrote me on 7 June 1977 that James Azbill who married Paulina Bicknell (see p. 13e) was the son of Joseph and Polly Harp Azbill (Joseph being the son of William Azbill and his 2nd wife Elizabeth Moore). She continued: "Thus one may see how so many cousin intermarriages look. The Cherokee blood comes through Mary Nancy Azbill Reeder and also Joseph Azbill's wife Mary Polly Harp--both $\frac{1}{2}$ Cherokee. I know for sure Great Uncle Sylvester Bicknell practised lots of Indian lore in his doctoring of folk around him--and he was dark as were his daughters, Malissa Bicknell Azbell and Juann Bicknell Purvis, and son Wilburn "Webb" Bicknell. (These I've seen in Ill. and Nevada.) But Uncle John Sherman Bicknell, their brother, had only black hair and eyes but fair as was his wife Aunt Lucy Asbell with light hair. Now Mary Nancy Asbill Reeder Bicknell being $\frac{1}{2}$ Cherokee and Mary Polly Harp being $\frac{1}{2}$ Cherokee, 'tis understandable why all of us look Indian--But of this I'm proud--and believe it's where we got some of our good (?) looks. My daughter Audrey Alger Rowe attended the funeral of my Uncle Esmer Azbill, age 87, in Waterloo, Iowa, and said he was still a very handsome man. He died Jan. 20, 1976 and is buried east of Waterloo, Iowa." This kind lady, now in her 80's, has written many items in this vein to me and furnished many pictures; therefore, much appreciation is due her for her help.

As we bring this Bicknell book to a conclusion, I must impress upon each one of the many who have made a contribution, however small, that we are leaving for posterity a record that becomes MORE valuable as the months stretch into the years of our 21st century.

June 20, 1977

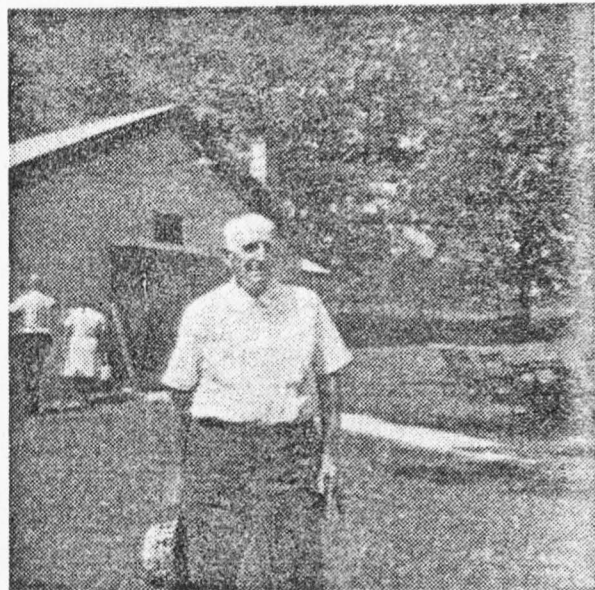
Vera Reeder, C. G.

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Claude C. Bicknell⁵
 of

Tabor, Iowa--the patriarch
 and moving force behind the
 Bicknell Family Association

This Bicknell Family Association became a reality as a result of a number of Reunions: several in various places in Iowa previous to the 1970 one held in Newton. The 1971, 1972, and 1973 meetings were held at Bicknell, Indiana, and the 1974 one is scheduled there on August 11. At the 1971 session, the decision was made to "make a stab" at publishing our genealogical history which would be available to members at cost, distributed at the reunions, the quantity of the publication to be determined by the contributions to the project. In 1972, thirty-one pages were distributed; in 1973 fifty-seven pages were added. This year(1974) we expect to add about 200 pages of lineage including about 75 pictures. While much more could be done, for the time being this completes our contribution to publishing the Bicknell family genealogy.

Your historian was surprised and honored in 1973 to receive the beautiful plaque--picture below. Thank you, one and all. The following printed card was attached to the plaque:

August 12, 1973--The wood contained in this plaque was taken from the dismantled home of an early day settler. This house was built shortly after the close of the Civil War, and thus this scrap of wood is a full century old.

As the wood from a walnut tree is considered among the finest and most elegant of any native to our midwest, so may it represent in some small degree, our devout regard and esteem for our beloved family member----- Vera Reeve.

May it convey to her a measure of our gratitude and appreciation for her loyal and untiring efforts to extend family historical knowledge and genealogy for the enlightenment of us all. May it also be presented as a symbol of her sturdiness of character and unfailing regard for every family member.

THE BICKNELL FAMILY



P R E F A C E

Among the items of goodly human interest which await us as we grow older is that of the study of our family's history and genealogy. By it we are uncovering facts and data which not only amaze but as well delight us beyond measure, causing many of us to wonder just why any part or epoch of this interesting family history of ours has been lost or clouded from view for even a generation of time.

Perhaps we Americans of all intelligent peoples have been guilty of neglect in this field in times past. In our zeal to cope successfully with the present and the future have we not overlooked the important duty to honor the memory of those family members who have gone on before, and to whom we owe a lasting and an eternal debt of gratitude?

Most happily this situation is changing. In recent years genealogy groups and societies have sprung up all over the country and they are very busy. These groups and societies do not include the veritable horde of human individuals who are doing family history and genealogy study on their own (usually on a part time basis). We are richly blest by having some of these good and gracious souls within our ranks, and to these dedicated family members is due a timely salute from all of us for their heroic efforts in behalf of us all.

As we all know, our earliest known ancestor was a Mr. Samuel Bicknell of Wilkes Co., North Carolina who was probably born in the state of Virginia C.H. 1745. Records reveal that he settled on land in the above named county and state in the year 1770. He departed this life near the close of the year 1819. By his two marriages he left fourteen surviving children. Were all the living descendants of this patriarch ancestor properly tabulated we are inclined to surmise that the number would run well into the thousands.

We should also here mention Samuel's younger brother, Thomas, who had also settled on Wilkes Co. land adjoining that of Samuel's. The above dates will clearly prove that these men lived through those trying times of our Colonial period which ultimately led up to the Revolutionary war. Indeed not all of the Colonists were classed as patriots nor were all of them Tories. In our grade school days we learned that this difference of opinion among the colonists often precipitated many serious disputes and clashes and their differences continued unabated until the surrender of Cornwallis at Yorktown prompted Great Britain's acknowledgement of the independence of the colonies.

In very recent years unimpeachable proof that our Samuel, altho handicapped by a physical defect which prevented his bearing of arms, sold or gave farm supplies to the patriot army. More generally known is the fact that the brother,

Thomas, became a professional soldier in the patriot army and was mortally wounded in the Battle of Kings Mountain. Do we not thrill with a certain sense of just pride for the noble courage, fortitude and patriotism of our ancestry stock?

May we now include a very few lines from the Bicknell Genealogy of 1913. Its editor and publisher was a Mr. Thomas W. Bicknell of Providence, R. I. In its preface are found these remarks: "An individual life has its known entrance and exit. Not so with a family. It was never born; it will never die."

Perhaps the greater part of Samuel's descendants do not now carry the Bicknell name. This fact is quite unimportant. We are all one family and we have a history and a heritage of which we are justly proud. May we ever continue to protect and perpetuate both.

CLAUDE C. BICKNELL, Oct. 1971
Tabor, Iowa



THE NORTH CAROLINA BICKNELLS

Among the families migrating into the new and unsettled regions of North Carolina--probably from Virginia and Pennsylvania--prior to the Revolutionary War were the Bicknells, Browns, Standleys, Lunsfords, Hendrens, Lewises and no doubt others. These families settled and lived in proximity to one another. When Samuel Bicknell first settled (probably about 1770) in what is now Wilkes County, he acquired the fine plantation of 315 acres called "Swan Pond," on the south side of the Yadkin River at the mouth of Swan Creek, near the modern village of Ronda; and shortly thereafter his brother Thomas, when he married, took up a 240 acre plantation lying on both sides of Swan Creek. Both brothers later received grants for their lands from the State of North Carolina after Independence was declared; prior to that time it was impossible for them to get legal title for these lands, since they lay with the personal proprietary of Lord Granville, who refused to issue any grants during the last years of the colonial period.

In 1779 Samuel Bicknell and his first wife Anne sold Swan Pond plantation to Capt. Alexander Gordon for 300 pounds, quite a large price at that time. Samuel's signature on the copied deed is "Samuel Becknel;" his wife Anne signed by mark. When Samuel signed his will forty years later, he spelled his surname "Becknal," but those of his sons who could write seem to have reverted to the earlier spelling, Bicknell.

For more than ten years after the sale of the Swan plantation, the Samuel Bicknell family seems to have resided in the same vicinity, but on the north side of the Yadkin River, still in the neighborhood of the present village of Ronda. Sometime in the 1790's Samuel Bicknell made his last move, to the valley of Big Hunting Creek, in the southeastern corner of Wilkes County, where he settled on a plantation which now lies in the western edge of the present Somers township. This property remained in the Bicknell family until after the Civil War; much of it eventually came into the possession of Samuel's youngest and wealthiest son, Larkin J. Bicknell.

The will of Samuel Bicknell is on record in the courthouse at Wilkesboro, North Carolina. It is written in longhand and still quite legible. The substance of it in print follows.

SAMUEL BECKNAL'S WILL; In the name of God, Amen. I Samuel Becknal, of the county of Wilkes and the state of North Carolina, being of sound and perfect mind and memory and calling to mind the uncertainty of this life do make and ordain this my last will and testament in manner and form following (to-wit).

Item 1. I give and bequeath to my beloved wife, Elizabeth Becknal, one-third part of my estate of every description both real and personal, all of which I give to her the aforesaid, Elizabeth Becknal and to her heirs forever.

Item 2. I give and bequeath to my daughter, Nancy Camp (likely Kemp), one dollar which I give and bequeath to her and her heirs forever.

Item 3. I give and bequeath to my son, Thomas Becknal, one dollar which I give to him and his heirs forever.

Item 4. I give and bequeath to my son, John Becknal, one dollar which I give to him and his heirs forever.

Item 5. I give and bequeath to my son, Linsfield Becknal, one dollar which I give to him and his heirs forever.

Item 6. I give and bequeath to my daughter, Jane Huland, one dollar which I give to her and her heirs forever.

Item 7. It is my will and desire that after the above bequest being given out of my estate that the balance of my estate of every description both real and personal be divided as follows: (to-wit) Between my son Benjamin Becknal, Randolph Becknal, Rhoda Brown, Hannah Stanley and my wife's five children (to-wit), Lewis, Larkin, Asenith, Clara and Dolly in equal shares which I give and bequeath to them and their heirs forever. I nominate and appoint my trusty friends, my beloved wife Elizabeth Becknal and Capt. Benjamin Lewis, Executor to this my last will and testament, revoking and disannulling all wills heretofore made by me. In witness whereof, I the aforesaid, Samuel Becknal have set my hand and affixed my seal to this my last will and testament this 21st day of August A.D. 1819.

In presence of
Wm. W. Morgan 2nd
his.

Samuel O. Nicholson
mark

Abraham Hooper
North Carolina--Wilkes County
January Term 1820

SAMUEL BECKNEL (mark)

The foregoing will was duly proven in open court by the oaths of Wm W. Morgan & Samuel Nicholson & Elizabeth Becknal duly qualified Executrix to said will.

Test. R. Martin, Clk.

Anne, first wife of Samuel Bicknell, died sometime in the 1790's and about 1800/1801 Samuel was married to his second wife, Elizabeth, who is described (1820) in the records of the litigation that followed Samuel's death, as "Elizabeth Fitzpatrick."

Samuel Bicknell's will disinherited five of his first wife's children, presumably because he felt he had already sufficiently provided for them.

Two of them, John Bicknell and Jane's husband Ambrose Hulin, attempted unsuccessfully to break his will in 1820. In 1826 the real estate was partitioned between the widow and the nine children who inherited under the will; after the allotting of a dower to the widow Elizabeth, the remainder of the plantation was divided into 19 acre lots which were distributed among the nine children. Most of these lots eventually found their way into the possession of the youngest son, Capt. Larkin J. Bicknell, by one means or another.

From his earliest settlement in Wilkes, Samuel Bicknell seems to have been a solid citizen; never wealthy, but sufficiently prosperous to be a good example of the substantial small planter class who were the backbone of the county. In addition to a moderately valuable plantation of several hundred acres, he owned a few slaves in his later years; he had one in 1790, and from the 1800 census until his death, about 1819, he owned three negroes. A few members of the connection in the subsequent generations were also slave owners on a moderate scale; Capt. Larkin J. Bicknell, Noah Brown and some of the Kemps. However, it is possible that most of the family were opposed to slavery, as the majority of them eventually removed to the free states of the Midwest.

THOMAS BICKNELL owned a plantation near Swan Pond adjoining that of his brother Samuel. Thomas was one of the patriot soldiers in the Revolutionary War and was mortally wounded at the Battle of Kings Mountain. In the pension application of Mrs. Rachel (Sparks) Bicknell, widow of Thomas Bicknell, nothing is said about Thomas' birth or background, but his Revolutionary service is stated in some detail. He died December 31, 1780 in Burke county at the home of Capt. John Bowman, where he had been carried from Kings Mountain in a seriously wounded condition. The only other vital statistics given are the date of his marriage to Rachel Sparks (Oct. 22, 1774, in Surry, now Wilkes, county), and the fact that he was survived by six children, the youngest of whom, a daughter Mary, was posthumous, having been born May 15, 1781, some four and a half months after her father's death. This girl afterwards married David Roper of Burke County, North Carolina, and removed to Pickens County, South Carolina; the widow Rachel Bicknell resided with her in the later years of her life. Rachel survived to an extreme old age; she was born December 12, 1757 and was still alive on Oct. 15, 1851. Mr. Allan L. Poe, a genealogist of Lenoir, N.C., reported "from other sources we know that there were six children, of whom there were two boys--William and Micajah.-----I should say that he (Thomas) was very probably a younger brother of Samuel Bicknell."

Mr. Poe also reported: "There were some BICKNELLS in old Surry (now Yadkin) county, N.C., who were probably closely related to Samuel Bicknell. The 1800 census lists a WILLIAM "BECKNEL" and wife, both born by 1755, with a family of six sons and four daughters at home; their apparent location was in the North

Hunting Creek section near the Wilkes county line, and therefore only a few miles from Samuel Bicknell's subsequent location in the present Somers township, Wilkes county. From his age it would appear that this William Bicknell could be a brother or a nephew of Samuel Bicknell.

Will of THOMAS BICKNELL, brother of Samuel Bicknell.--March Term 1781

In the name of God, Amen. I, Thomas Bicknell, Wilkes Co. in the State of North Carolina being much disordered in body but of sound mind and memory and reflecting on the uncertainty of human affairs do make this my last will and testament in manner and form following viz--

I commit my body to the earth, there to be decently interred at the discretion of my executors and my worldly estate Desposed of as follows: I will and bequeath unto my beloved wife, Rachel, the plantation whereon I Dwell together with my horses and cattle, sheep and hoggs and all my household Furniture and plantation tools to the intent she may be able to raise my children and I hereby appoint my wife, Rachel, sole executrix of this my last will and testament as witness my hand and seal this 20th day of Oct. 1780.

Seal, Thomas Becknal

Signed, Sealed and acknowledged in the presence of us
Joseph Dobson
Israel Bowman
Samuel Bicknell
Wm. Terril Lewis
Wm. Bagland
Gabril Loving Jr.

The above will was duly proved by the oath of Gabriel Loving, Jun, a subscribing witness thereto and ordered to be recorded.

(A True copy test)

Wm. Lenoirs
G. Wheatley

ABSTRACT OF PENSION APPLICATION OF NORTH CAROLINA SOLDIERS OF THE REVOLUTIONARY WAR as reported by William Perry Johnson

THOMAS BIECKNELL or BEICKNELL or BICKNELL, Rachel, N. C., R12399 Pickens District, South Carolina 3 December 1845. Mrs. Rachel Biecknell, aged 88 years the 12th instant, and who, the said Ordinary certifies, is unable by bodily infirmity to attend in open court, in order to benefit by the 3rd section of the act of Congress of the 4th of July 1836, declareth, on oath, that she is the widow of Thomas Beicknell who was a private and lieutenant in the War of the Revolution, that she was married to the said Thomas Biecknell when in her 17th year, and that she thinks when she had 3 children her said husband entered the service under Capt. Richard Allen, who was afterwards Colonel. That they then resided in Wilkes County, North Carolina, and her said husband there entered the first time, and was not much at home until the close of the war. That he

was at one time a volunteer and at other times drafted, and was a considerable portion of the time a Lieutenant, that she is sure he was a Lieutenant under Capt. Allen at the siege of Charleston, that he marched much through North and South Carolina, and served at various times under Col. Lanore, Col. Cleveland & Col. Hearne, but it is impossible for her to state the particulars of his service, at her advanced age. That her husband the said Thomas Biecknell was wounded with an ounce ball in his hip in the Battle of King's Mountain, with which wound he died. He was carried to Burke County near Morganton, to the house of Mrs. Bowman, where declarant went and waited upon him with his wound eleven weeks, at the end of which time he died. She does not know of any documentary evidence, or any evidence of any kind that she can certainly get to prove his service, but thinks an indent may have been issued to her for his services, as she recollects to have tried to get something, and thinks she did get a small sum, but does not know how.

That she was married to the said Thomas Biecknell in Wilkes County, North Carolina, by Squire Riggs, as she believes on the 22d October, as she thinks in the year 1774, as she had 3 children when her husband entered the service, and when his service closed entirely she had 5 children, and four months and 15 days after his death her sixth child, Mary, was born. Her said daughter, Mary, married David Roper, and she now lives with her, and on their charity. She has no record of her marriage, nor of the birth of her children. They (the marriage banns) were published in church, as the custom was in those days to be married. That her husband the aforesaid Thomas Becknell died on 31 December 1780, and that she has remained a widow ever since.

Wilkes Co., N. C., 22 Sept. 1851. Deposition of Sarah Gray, "an old and Respectable Lady." States she knew Thomas Beicknell well, that she heard and believes that the said Beicknell was a Revolutionary soldier, that he lived in her immediate neighborhood, and that he was from home a considerable time, said to be in the service of his country. This deponent had a brother in the Battle of King's Mountain, and she recollects "to of often herd" her brother say that the said Thomas Biecknell was also in the said Battle of King's Mountain and was badly wounded in his hip and never recovered from the said wound. She further says that she heard her brother say that he assisted to bring said Beicknell home from the Battle of King's Mountain. She knows the said Beicknell had a wife and several children, his wife's maiden name she recollects very well was Rachael Sparks. She does not think any records of marriages were kept in those days. This deponent does not exactly know her own age, but her oldest child is sixty-two years old, and she thinks she was about or near twenty years old when her oldest child was born. This deponent further says she knew the said Thomas Beicknell to be a man of good character, and always was said to be a true man to his country, and she has no doubt but he served in the war several years and was in several battles at various times. She also says Mrs. Rachael Becknell was a woman of good and unimpeachable character, and she would be bound to believe her statement in any matter. This deponent says she was born in Virginia but came to this neighborhood when a child, and has lived here ever since. That Mrs. Rachel Beicknell left this country many years since and she never heard of her marrying.